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on Tuesday, 8 June 1993, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. HADID	(Algeria)
Later:	Mr. RYSINSKI (Vice-President)	(Poland)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR 1992 AND PROGRAMME-LEVEL ACTIVITIES
(continued) (DP/1993/10 and Add.1-5)

1. Mr. MERREM (Director, Division for Operational Activities and Technical Services, United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)) said that the magnitude, dynamics and complexity of the drug problem underlined the need for a comprehensive assessment of its ramifications and implications.
2. Technical consultations had recently been held in Colombia, jointly sponsored by the Government of Colombia and UNDCP, with the assistance of UNDP. In Colombia, there had been a surge of illicit poppy cultivation over the past five years, expanding to a total area of some 20,000 hectares. In an effort to diversify the supply to major markets, drug syndicates were adding heroin to the existing line of production of cocaine, using the wholesale distribution systems already in place. Illicit slash and burn cultivation, on the slopes of the Andes was encroaching on forest reserves and had affected 50,000 hectares. Over those five years, heroin abuse had become a clearly discernible phenomenon in Colombia, with some 6,000 habitual users; at least 25 per cent of domestic heroin addicts were also HIV positive.
3. World wide, there were tens of millions of habitual drug users and addicts. The global aggregate retail proceeds were in the order of \$300 to \$500 billion. Essential developmental and humanitarian needs could be funded if even part of the annual global proceeds from illicit drug use were used for more constructive purposes. New trafficking routes were rapidly being developed, especially through countries in Eastern Europe which were vulnerable because of economic change and disruption and the low level of preparedness of the legal sector and law enforcement machinery. In Central Asia, refugees returning to Afghanistan were cultivating poppies, and there had been major seizures in Nicaragua. In the Bahamas, the Government had earmarked 15 per cent of the national budget for drug control. The upsurge in psychotropic substances was particularly evident in several parts of Africa. At the same time, there had been a relative decline in illicit production in Bolivia and Colombia, largely because of persevering government efforts.
4. On the linkages between the drug problem and development, there was an obvious vulnerability in countries affected by civil strife and economic disruption, for example in Afghanistan and in Lebanon. A causal chain could be observed in South-East Asia and north Pakistan and in some Andean countries. Ethnic and indigenous marginality, remoteness, poverty that was often abject, and growing population pressure made illicit cultivation a plausible means of earning income because of the ease of marketing. As a consequence, major environmental degradation was being noted as a result of slash and burn cultivation by migrant farmers. Drug production represented a waste of social investment and a loss to development of potentially active population segments. For example Pakistan, with at least 2 million habitual drug abusers, was a net importer of narcotic drugs. There was a clear correlation between the proliferation of HIV/AIDS infection and drug abuse, mostly intravenous, for example in Myanmar where 50 to 80 per cent of habitual drug users were HIV

(Mr. Merrem)

infected. The urbanization process led to an erosion of traditional family bonds and value systems and general deprivation leading to a propensity to drug abuse.

5. The global priority agenda of the next few decades must include drug abuse control. Any lasting solution required broad alliances; participative involvement, community empowerment and broad private sector and NGO involvement were as important as government resolve.

6. Action against drugs could not be designed and implemented for people but had to be carried out with people and by people. Given the global nature of the drug phenomenon, subregional cooperation was an important feature in responding to the challenges of drug abuse and illicit production.

7. UNDCP was in a state of transition. It was sharpening its focus and streamlining its operational modalities, emphasizing a three-fold function: to facilitate Governments' own action; to ensure appropriate coordination between players within and outside the United Nations system and to create a centre of expertise including an easily accessible external pool of expertise. Its annual budget was about \$80 million. UNDCP enjoyed sustained donor support, but it had to optimize the use of its resources. Economies of operation were vital for achieving expanded coverage. UNDCP sought to maintain a lean structure with only 8 per cent of programme resources spent on the professional staff contingent, of whom 35 per cent were women. There was a need for greater flexibility in resource deployment in view of changing features and strategic priorities. UNDCP intended to maintain a very limited field presence and to put the emphasis on the technical-professional profile of its teams. In order to achieve a coherent programme, government masterplans would become an essential coordination and resource mobilization tool. A balanced approach was needed incorporating demand reduction, alternative development, United Nations system participation, and the establishment of effective judicial machinery. UNDCP would therefore depend on an integrated field office structure so as to be able to devote more attention to analysis, to develop compatible statistics and to have an early warning function.

8. UNDCP was pleased to note the progress made in the new working arrangements featuring the UNDP resident representatives as integrators and facilitators of the special mandates of UNDCP.

9. There was a need in major problem countries for socio-economic impact studies and a better understanding of the correlation between environmental destruction and illicit cultivation. Community-based and community propelled programmes were needed, especially in the area of demand and supply reduction; capacity-building was of the essence. The link between AIDS prevention and drug abuse prevention must be strengthened. Research, which had largely focused on the developed world, needed to concentrate much more on developing countries and on local concerns.

10. Mr. INOUE (International Labour Organisation) said that ILO fully supported the new modalities that had been introduced by UNDP in respect of operational activities. It shared the concern expressed over the sharply declining flow of resources for operational activities for development at a time when the United Nations system was expected to play an increasingly important developmental role.

11. ILO fully recognized the need for agencies to be involved in the project cycle at a very early stage so as to ensure that their technical services were fully utilized at all stages; in particular the views of the relevant agencies should be sought by UNDP resident representatives in assessing the capacity of a national entity for executing projects so as to ensure that the national entity was fully accountable. That process had not been satisfactory. On technical support services at the programme level (TSS-1), he noted that the implementation of ILO's work plan for 1992-1993 was progressing in a very satisfactory manner. An evaluation was being made of operations carried out thus far. There had been some weaknesses and constraints, including a failure to make the operations entirely demand-driven, dispersal of resources on too many small activities and a need for appropriate funding for preparatory and follow-up activities. ILO was concerned that use of technical support services at the project level (TSS-2) remained only marginal; if that situation continued, there was a risk of the entire new system being seriously undermined. Appropriate remedial action needed to be taken as soon as possible.

12. Capacity-building, and particularly human resources development, had always been a major priority of the ILO technical cooperation programme over the years. Recently the ILO Turin Training Centre had been playing a key role in the development and implementation of the training programme for the management of development. The centre was prepared to contribute actively to the implementation of the various capacity-building training programmes outlined in General Assembly resolution 47/199.

13. ILO supported the expanded concept of capacity-building to include not only governmental but also non-governmental institutions. As a tripartite organization involving Governments, employers and workers, ILO promoted the active participation of employers' and workers' organizations in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development policies and programmes, which in turn could contribute to enhancing the sustainability of development. That process was highly relevant in the countries where democratization and economic liberalization were expected to lead to greater consultation with those organizations on economic and social options.

14. On the question of decentralization, ILO was undergoing sweeping policy changes in respect of the management of operational activities. ILO area office directors would be made fully responsible for all the operations in the countries they covered, with the technical support of 14 multidisciplinary teams which were being deployed globally. More resources would be shifted to the subregional and country levels covering area offices and multidisciplinary teams. More financial and accounting functions would be decentralized to area offices.

15. Mr. ZIARAN (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation fully agreed with the Administrator that external cooperation should support, not be a substitute for, national goals and programmes; to that end, the existence of a national programme framework and the role of UNDP were of the utmost importance. That approach was in line with one of the paramount principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the right of self-determination, which included a nation's right to determine its own economic development.

16. Many initiatives should be launched to attain the goal of the integration of women in development. His delegation welcomed the availability of Special Programme Resources (SPR) for that purpose. However, the integration of women in development could not be seen in isolation from the development process as a whole. In those developing countries whose populations were faced with enormous economic problems and were striving to survive, the opportunities available to women were slim.

17. The current project approach had created an enormous amount of paperwork and long delays, thereby diminishing the system's responsiveness and flexibility. Bearing in mind the difficulties in coordinating various multisectoral projects and the need for a more flexible methodology, his delegation supported the idea of a programme approach. The use of common premises by various operational activities as well as decentralization and national execution were significant steps towards harmonization of the activities of the system and eliminated unnecessary expenditure.

18. His Government, in collaboration with UNDP and the World Bank, had prepared a project aimed at formulating a national strategy for sustainable development and introducing the relevant elements of Agenda 21 into the development planning process. So far 19 groups had been formed to join in that exercise, which had also resulted in a re-examination of national development goals and policies.

19. Given the importance of access to information, experience and participatory technology for protection of the environment, his delegation fully supported the measures taken by UNDP for the creation of Sustainable Development Networks (SDNs). It welcomed the establishment of the Regional Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. At least seven members of CIS were linked through a subregional organization, the Economic Cooperation Organization, to their southern neighbours covered by the Regional Division for Asia and the Pacific. There was therefore a need for coordination and cooperation between the two divisions, particularly in regional, subregional and interregional activities. There was also an urgent need to protect the vulnerable ecosystem of the Caspian Sea, which was being threatened by overexploitation. UNDP, in collaboration with the countries of the region, should explore ways and means of protecting that environment.

20. His delegation was concerned at the pressure being put on international resources, and stressed that funding of humanitarian operations and transition from centrally planned economies to market economies in Eastern Europe should not be at the expense of development assistance to developing countries.

21. Mr. OPRONG (Observer for Kenya) said that the United Nations had long served as the battleground in the fight for ideological and military dominance; international cooperation for development had been an important weapon in that struggle. It would now resume the vital task of peace-keeping and peacemaking. Great numbers of civilian and military personnel had been deployed in conflict areas all over the world, including Europe, and humanitarian assistance had been widely distributed. But the United Nations could not afford to neglect the social and economic needs of developing countries; only a strong, self-sustaining social and economic base could guarantee lasting peace. Ways must be found to strengthen international cooperation so that those competing needs could be met.

22. In the preceding two years, African countries had embarked on radical political and economic reforms, which had badly strained available resources and personnel, with consequent social and political unrest. Since donor support had been linked to changes in the political scene, it had often failed to materialize at critical junctures. Those difficulties had been aggravated inter alia by the debt burden, the drop in export earnings and population growth. In addition, the HIV/AIDS epidemic was expected to affect millions in the 1990s unless urgent measures were taken to stem its spread. Unfortunately, the developed world had proved insensitive to the severe political and economic measures undertaken by African countries; the lack of social and infrastructure investment also constituted serious obstacles to development. His delegation contended that the international community, and in particular the developed countries, had an obligation to fulfil their commitments to meet the needs of Africa, set out in such consensus agreements as the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, and the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.

23. Current reports demonstrated that UNDP was in serious financial straits which could jeopardize its capacity to carry out its fifth cycle programmes. He appealed to donors to provide UNDP with the resources necessary to prevent the projected cuts in expenditures under the fifth cycle. For sub-Saharan Africa, the cuts would undermine ongoing efforts to support and sustain political and economic reforms. Cuts in resources for regional programmes would impede regional integration efforts, whose main objectives were the expansion and diversification of interregional trade. Africa's share of UNFPA resources had also fallen although the population was still growing rapidly - although it accounted for only 12 per cent of the world's population in 1992, that percentage was expected to rise to 19 per cent by 2025. In the light of those factors, he stressed the potentially grave consequences of reversing the development gains made by sub-Saharan Africa, and urged the Council to take decisive action to restore former resource levels.

24. His delegation supported the proposals put forth by the Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa concerning resource mobilization, structural changes and skill upgrades in the Bureau and, encouraged by the success of the Economist Programme, urged the Council to approve the proposal that the number of economist posts within the Bureau be increased to 40. Kenya was encouraged to hear that the Office of Project Services (OPS) had been relocated in the Department for Development Support and Management Services and felt that the Council's concerns about the maintenance of relations between OPS and the Council had been adequately addressed. He commended the efforts of the Nordic

(Mr. Oprong, Observer, Kenya)

countries to improve the responsiveness of operational activities for development, through improved governance and financial predictability.

25. After briefly reviewing Kenya's economic performance since independence, he said that UNDP projects had contributed significantly to improving the standard of living in Kenya and had greatly enhanced Kenya's institutional capacity and capabilities for economic management. He urged the developed countries to rally round UNDP to enable it to handle its increased responsibilities.

26. Mr. OSVALD (Sweden) said that UNDP should continue to play a crucial role in the unique work of the United Nations. The crisis faced by UNDP was not purely financial; the concept of aid had come increasingly under fire and demands for efficiency, relevance and results had been growing. Questions had also arisen regarding the role of the United Nations in long-term development. The World Bank group and the regional development banks had gradually become more prominent in such development activities, and the United Nations consequently ran the risk of marginalization in the economic and social field. The increased pressure on donor countries to provide funds for emergency relief operations meant that funds for long-term development would be much harder to find. Though economic and social matters had traditionally been separate from United Nations peace-keeping efforts, they were increasingly being linked with development in the political arena. While UNDP should serve as an instrument for the pursuit of peace, democracy and development, its role and mandate should be more clearly defined. In the current development arena, competition for funds was becoming increasingly tough. In the view of Sweden, the basic concepts of central funding and system coordination were problematic. UNDP would never be the sole channel for United Nations development resources. The bulk of multilateral development funding would be handled by the World Bank and by the regional development banks. For shaping the future of development, the potential of UNDP therefore resided more in matters of policy than of funding.

27. During the 1980s, the economies of the Latin American, African and Eastern European countries had grown very little or stagnated, while many countries in South-East Asia as well as in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had grown substantially. Policy, not the availability of resources was the decisive factor. The adoption of new development policies in many Latin American countries had led to the revitalization of their economies. More investment capital had been flowing into Latin America than official development assistance (ODA) could ever provide. The same was true for China and other growth economies in Asia. In Russia, on the other hand, unsound economic policies were driving away international capital as well as ODA. To develop policy, policy capacity must also be enhanced; insight and analysis were ultimately more important than funding and coordination.

28. A more effective system for governance and funding was a fundamental prerequisite for the development of UNDP, and he therefore commended the work of the relevant informal working group. However, reforms would be of limited value unless accompanied by leadership, vision and high quality in project and programme delivery.

(Mr. Osvald, Sweden)

29. Comparative advantages must indeed be explored and defined if UNDP was to acquire a clear development assistance profile. One such advantage was technical assistance measures designed to promote capacity development. The UNDP-commissioned study on rethinking technical cooperation showed that experience, established models and results must be more closely evaluated if operations were to become effective. Sweden commended the advocacy role taken by UNDP, principally in such efforts as the Human Development Report, which had created a new instrument for multidimensional assessment of development, establishing UNDP as a strong, innovative voice in the development dialogue. UNDP should explore further ways to implement those recommendations in its operational activities.

30. The Nordic countries were actively participating in efforts to increase the effectiveness of United Nations emergency relief operations. UNDP had an important role to play in the follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Through the Capacity 21 programme UNDP could develop various measures to support capacity-building in recipient countries. However, sustainable development should not be treated as an additional component requiring special funding, but should be integrated into the regular programme within the core budget.

31. The AIDS epidemic had become a tangible threat to the economic and social development of an increasing number of countries. Illicit drug trafficking and the abuse of narcotic substances had also become obstacles to political, economic and social development. UNDP could significantly contribute to stopping the spread of HIV and drug abuse by integrating social and economic measures into country programmes.

32. The Human Development Report 1993 had revealed that development projects should begin at the grass-roots level. Technical cooperation was increasingly needed in the area of human rights and democracy in order to foster socio-economic development. Cooperation between UNDP and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and among national and international NGOs and voluntary organizations should be developed.

33. Mr. Rysinski (Poland), Vice-President, took the chair.

34. Mr. ABELIAN (Observer for Armenia) said that the collapse of traditional economic and trade arrangements, devastation caused by the massive earthquake of 1988 and the sudden introduction of world market prices for imports had caused serious economic and social problems in his country. None the less, his Government remained committed to democracy and to developing a market economy. UNDP could play an important role in fostering the development of the private sector. His Government was deeply grateful to the United Nations for establishing the UNDP interim office in his country and was convinced that specialized agencies which could provide technical, advisory and coordinating assistance would enhance the durability of the transition that was already under way.

35. Mr. PETERS (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) said the High Commissioner had launched a three-pronged strategy involving prevention, emergency response and solutions to tackle the gap between humanitarian assistance and long-term development. Developmental activities were vital to resolving a number of problems of refugees and the internally displaced. By engaging development agencies like UNDP at the planning stage, it should become easier for UNHCR to disengage itself once it had completed its own task, while other, more development-oriented agencies carried on and completed measures initiated by UNHCR.

36. Initiatives to bridge the development gap had revealed that special emergency development assistance was needed in returnee operations, and UNHCR had singled out three elements for immediate attention in order to address that gap. They were: increased inter-agency cooperation, new models of intervention for quick-acting development and the inclusion of areas of return in national reconstruction plans. Moreover, owing to the scarcity of resources, a more careful assessment of needs and budgets and a consolidated resource strategy were imperative.

37. The collaboration of UNHCR and UNDP would continue to be tested in operations around the world. UNDP's role had been crucial in the reintegration of returnees in Mozambique, South-East Asia and Central America. More recently, UNHCR had provided material humanitarian assistance to a number of new independent States, and was closely following UNDP activities in the former Soviet Union in order to maximize coordination.

38. Mr. ANSARI (India) said that despite domestic constraints, his Government had regularly increased its voluntary contribution to UNDP during the previous two years. His country looked forward to continued technical assistance from UNDP that would facilitate the development of environment-friendly technologies. Decentralization measures that envisaged delegating financial powers to the Resident Representatives would help countries to proceed with important issues without waiting for time-consuming approval procedures.

39. Capacity 21 offered UNDP a chance to address coordination issues at national levels and assist Governments in planning a clear strategy for implementing sustainable environmental programmes. However, concern for the environment should be integrated into the activities of other agencies in order to avoid any duplication. While the move from a concept of "assistance" to one of "cooperation" was commendable, new impulses for cooperation should not undermine recipient Governments' basic commitment to steer the destinies of their countries in the most sustainable manner.

40. He urged all donors to maintain the levels of their contributions to UNDP, pointing out that otherwise UNDP would have to cut back projects in developing countries. While efforts to streamline procedures and improve efficiency were commendable, restructuring had to be approached cautiously. His Government welcomed increased technical cooperation in areas such as the fight against HIV/AIDS, but warned against enlarging UNDP's mandate to such an extent that the organization ceased to be effective.

(Mr. Ansari, India)

41. While certain improvements had been made in the new Human Development Report 1993, new criteria had introduced indicators which were too general to reflect the complex socio-economic conditions of countries. The academic excellence of the report, with reference to his country, had been marred by a total disregard of the fact that, in spite of deprivations, his Government had honoured the dignity of the individual and rejected uniformity in thought and action. He hoped that future such reports would be fine-tuned to better reflect rational criteria and take better cognizance of countries that had performed well under adverse conditions.

42. Mr. CHINETOV (Observer for Kyrgyzstan) said that he was particularly concerned about UNDP technical assistance to his country and hoped that the favourable approach thus far adopted towards its needs would continue. As a newly independent State, with a new constitution and a new national currency, as well as long-standing economic problems, his country was reliant on UNDP technical assistance and hoped that the constructive work on drawing up a country programme would soon bear fruit. The country programme under preparation was a comprehensive one and should be implemented as soon as possible in order to promote sustainable development and capacity-building.

43. He recognized that UNDP resources were limited and that priorities needed to be identified. In that connection, he welcomed the fruitful cooperation between his Government and the UNDP office in Kyrgyzstan, which had prompted donor countries such as Norway and the Netherlands to review their attitude towards his country and offer valuable support.

44. The scientific and technological activities of UNDP were particularly important to his country and to the Commonwealth of Independent States as a whole, and he welcomed the emphasis placed on organizational and managerial aspects. Given the lack of resources, funds should be concentrated on technology transfer and the Special Programme Resources (SPR) should also be used for that purpose. Scientific and technical activities could also contribute to his country's privatization policy. He regretted the 30 per cent reduction in the UNDP budget but felt that science and technology should be exempt from budget cuts and that SPR funding should be increased because of its important catalytic effects.

45. The outcome of the meeting in Bishken between donor countries and international financial organizations had been most encouraging, particularly the cooperation between the United Nations and the World Bank. His country's social and economic reforms and favourable human rights record were encouraging donors to provide assistance, which was being effectively managed by the State Committee on Foreign Investments. The introduction of the new national currency was posing serious challenges and clearly further financial support was needed from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other agencies to sustain the country's development and help its people. Finally, he noted that the Human Development Report, 1993 contained valuable information on his own and other countries.

46. Mr. SOEGARDA (Indonesia) agreed with the Administrator that development and development cooperation had taken a new direction as a result of changing circumstances and attitudes, increasing interdependence and globalization, and a broadened concept of peace and security. Development should be seen as a multidimensional, broad-based and people-centred endeavour, involving grass-roots participation and embracing both men and women. Its social, economic and political dimensions had been recognized, as had the importance of sustainability.

47. The disappointing resource situation for 1993 posed a threat to the effective execution of current and also future programmes. Nevertheless, some donors had announced a substantial increase in their contributions and he hoped that others would follow that example and that cost-sharing and other extrabudgetary resources would be further strengthened.

48. The promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) was vital for national capacity-building, increasing South-South cooperation and encouraging broad-based, people-centred development. In addition, it would help expand the world economy, bringing benefits to the developed countries too. In that connection, he welcomed the various measures already taken by UNDP to increase the use of the TCDC modality, as detailed in the report of the Administrator (DP/1993/52). He welcomed the fact that personnel from his country had been chosen to serve as resource persons for national sensitization and orientation workshops, which, together with increased information flows, should help improve awareness of the value of TCDC. Strengthened focal points and the availability of data through the TCDC Information Referral System (INRES) should make it easier to identify the institutional capacity of developing countries. The problems posed by lack of funding and the failure to appreciate the benefits of TCDC could be overcome through more effective use of indicative planning figures and the provision of greater information on the needs and capacities of developing countries.

49. With reference to General Assembly resolution 47/199, he welcomed the call for closer coordination between developing countries and the United Nations development system, as well as the emphasis on national execution and ownership of country programmes. Increased emphasis should also be placed on human resource development.

50. The various funding organizations and programmes of the United Nations system should be reviewed so as to harmonize their cycles and adapt them to the national budget cycles, plans and strategies of the developing countries. In addition, national execution should be the norm for programmes and projects of UNDP and UNFPA, and greater priority should be given to improving the developing countries' capacity in that respect.

51. Despite its limitations, the Human Development Report appeared to be moving in the right direction and he welcomed the dropping of the human freedom index and the increased focus on health, well-being and education. Bearing in mind that there was no single model for successful development, the report needed to be more sensitive to the culture and traditions of individual countries. The report had rightly advocated greater decentralization; his country had always stressed the need to mobilize grass-roots development within a framework of

(Mr. Soegarda, Indonesia)

growth, stability and equity. Given the growing consensus that human resources were the essential means of achieving economic, social and development objectives, he hoped that future reports would focus more on helping developing countries to meet their own development goals.

52. On the question of restructuring and reform of the United Nations, he stressed the need for greater participation by developing countries in decision-making processes, so as to make the workings of the system more transparent and democratic. He noted the initiative to relocate the Office of Project Services in the Department for Development Support and Management Services and hoped that the quality and effectiveness of its work would be maintained and strengthened.

53. UNDP had made a significant contribution towards integrating environmental concerns into the mainstream of development activities and he particularly welcomed the Capacity 21 programme it had launched, especially the emphasis placed on capacity-building, human development, participation and sustainability. Environment and development issues were inseparable and global in nature and should be addressed jointly by both developed and developing countries. He therefore hoped that Capacity 21 would not be constrained by lack of financing.

54. Mr. KABIR (Observer for Bangladesh) said that the vast political and economic changes of recent years had led to a new direction in development efforts, which were now focused on the welfare of the individual and the community. However, the hopes placed in the peace dividend and enhanced international cooperation in the post-cold war period had not been realized, while the international community's preoccupation with the Commonwealth of Independent States and the countries of Eastern Europe had put pressure on the resources available to developing countries. For the second consecutive year, the growth rate of UNDP central resources had fallen well short of the 8 per cent target set by the Governing Council in decision 90/34, thereby jeopardizing the ability of UNDP to meet its commitments under current and future programmes. For programme planning purposes, UNDP had decided to assume that only 75 per cent of the indicative planning figures established would be available, but he urged donors to make the commitments needed so that programme needs could be met in full.

55. Although UNDP technical cooperation assistance had made a laudable contribution to the development process in the developing countries over recent decades, a number of weaknesses remained. Because of shortcomings in the provision of training experts, institutional capacities in key economic areas had not been properly developed, while failure to meet national priorities and use of inappropriate technology had also caused distortions. Technology transfer had not been achieved on any major scale and the absence of a clear relationship between development priorities, sectoral objectives and technical aid programming was a further source of concern.

56. The implementation of General Assembly resolutions 44/211, 46/219 and 47/199 would ensure strong country-based programmes, better coordination and a cooperative approach. The programme approach, national execution, capacity-

(Mr. Kabir, Observer, Bangladesh)

building, decentralization, monitoring and evaluation were all important elements and their implementation should be accelerated to enhance programme quality and delivery. UNDP support should be geared to the specific characteristics of developing countries and the United Nations system should give greater priority to building the developing countries' capacity to undertake national execution. In order to enhance coherence, programme development and approval should be further decentralized to the field offices, whose efficiency should be improved through appropriate training programmes so as to help ensure timely and cost-effective implementation of country programmes. The fullest possible use should be made of existing national expertise and institutions and inter-agency coordination should be strengthened. The resident coordinator function should also be strengthened and appropriate training programmes should be organized to ensure effective implementation of the new support cost arrangements.

57. The Capacity 21 programme was a timely initiative which would assist developing countries in building national capacity for sustainable development and help them respond adequately to the requirements resulting from Agenda 21 and the agreements reached in Rio. It would help mobilize resources for the implementation of Agenda 21 through national and local environmental programmes and would play a catalytic role by integrating environmental concerns in development planning.

58. The economies of the least developed countries faced daunting problems and their economic performance and social economic progress in the early 1990s had been disappointing. Per capita GDP had fallen, flows of official development assistance had declined and high levels of external debt continued to pose problems. In response to the Programme of Action adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the countries concerned had initiated economic reforms to improve mobilization and use of resources and provide increased opportunities for the private sector and market economy. However, those reforms must be supported through increased external financing, debt relief measures and increased access to markets. The increased allocation of resources to least developed countries during the fifth programming cycle established by Governing Council decision 90/34 would continue to be an important plank of UNDP policy in future years.

59. Whatever reforms were introduced, the main characteristics of UNDP operational activities must be preserved, including its universality, neutrality and multilateralism, and its ability to respond to the developing countries' own policies and priorities. It must never lose the support it enjoyed from the developing countries as a result of their sense of ownership and participation in governance. UNDP should be given adequate resources to enable it to fulfil all the provisions of resolution 47/199, since no institution could be fully effective or innovative in a climate of financial uncertainty.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.